

Stephen R. Soukup Publisher
soukup@thepoliticalforum.com

Mark L. Melcher Editor
melcher@thepoliticalforum.com

THEY SAID IT

The head of the Brooklyn /Queens chapter of the National Organization for Women said she could separate Weiner's sexcapades from the liberal track record that earned the group's support.

"I wasn't happy to discover that my congressman is a 14-year-old boy," said Julie Kirshner, president of the NOW chapter.

"But he happens to be one of the best politicians out there, so we're in a bad position. We're trying to give him the benefit of the doubt."

"Women Dems Turned on by Rep. Anthony Weiner's Politics are Disgusted by His Sexting Antics," *New York Daily News*, June 13, 2011.

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ANTHONY WEINER, BILL CLINTON, AND AMERICAN "FEMINISM."

We hate to sound like the blame-America-first loons of the far left, but this really is a truly absurd country some times. If, say, you happen to be one of its leaders – one of the 536 men and women elected to federal office to represent the people of the world's most successful and powerful democratic republic – and you happen to get caught carrying on with at least half-a-dozen women in a bizarre and twisted form of 21st century cyber-sex, you can say that you "accept full responsibility" for your admittedly stupid actions and then turn around less than a week later and take a leave of absence from your elected seat to "enter rehab" for an undisclosed illness. And not only will no one blink, they'll all just nod along sadly but knowingly, disappointed that it's come to this but so very glad that you are finally getting the "help" you clearly need.

Pardon us for asking the pertinent questions that no one else seems to be willing to ask, but is there really "help" available and rehabilitation possible for being a sneering, narcissistic, sexually predatory, misogynistic little rat? And if so, does anyone really think that that's the condition for which Anthony Weiner intends to be "treated?"

Color us skeptical. On both counts.

It's strange how these stories play out. At this time last week, Weiner was a joke. And a pretty funny one at that. This week, the joke is over. But the story drags on. And on. And on . . . And on.

Those in the Democratic Party Leadership who turned on Weiner over the weekend and demanded his resignation – Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, DNC Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman-Shultz, to name just three – did so, by their own admission, because they were tired of Weiner

and his on-line antics being a “distraction.” Which, translated from Washington-speak, means that they were tired of people opening their morning paper or their web browser and reading the latest revelation about DEMOCRATIC Congressman Anthony Weiner. They were tired of Weiner’s smug but humiliated face being the face of the Democratic Party. They were, in short, tired of the fact that Anthony Weiner got caught and embarrassed them.

But if Weiner was a distraction and an embarrassment to them, he was and is much more than that to the rest of us; that is, to any sentient being who has paid even the remotest attention to what Anthony Weiner did, to what he said and wrote, and to the arguments that have been mustered in his defense, such as it is. To us, Anthony Weiner is a symbol of all that is wrong with and all that is dangerous and pathetic about American liberalism, which, for all its manifest and manifold failures, was once at least moved toward noble and admirable ends, even if by naïve, foolish, and ultimately destructive means.

Perhaps the most uncompromising defense of Anthony Weiner was given just this past Friday evening by alleged comedienne, onetime Air America radio talk show host, and “feminist” activist Janeane Garofalo, who not only endorsed the beleaguered Congressman, but argued that he deserves a promotion. To wit:

Anthony Weiner deserves to be supported and hopefully he will be mayor of New York one day. I’m serious. He is a Democrat [who] actually fights for the things liberals and progressive and rational people care about.

I don’t know why he’s being thrown under the bus. He hasn’t done any – he hasn’t broke (sic) any laws....

You will notice two things here about this defense. First, Garofalo stops herself just short of saying that Weiner did “nothing wrong.” She starts to say it, but

corrects herself mid-sentence, apparently aware that she would probably have a tough time convincing a large group of people – even a crowd depraved enough to show up for HBO’s Bill Maher show (where Garofalo made her comments) – that there’s “nothing wrong” with carrying on with several women behind your *pregnant* wife’s back, sending them dirty pictures with your phone, and having private, unsupervised text chats with at least one underage high-school girl who then later bragged about the sexual acts she wished to perform on or with you.

Garofalo – the “liberal . . . progressive . . . rational” person – is apparently unable to convince herself that such behavior is “wrong,” but at least she is aware enough to realize that she is probably still in the minority in this country, which is a small comfort, we suppose.

Second, and more to the point, though she declares that Weiner “fights for the things liberals and progressive and rational people care about,” she doesn’t actually mention any of those “things.” This may have been an oversight on Garofalo’s part, or it may have been intentional. We don’t know and, frankly, don’t really care. In any case, we doubt seriously that Garofalo didn’t mention these “things” because she was embarrassed by them, though any normal person would be. You see, it’s not that she loves the way he sticks up for the poor, or how he fights for the downtrodden and oppressed, or his caring and delicate defense of human rights and personal dignity. No, it’s really much simpler and much more base than that.

How do we know what she meant if she didn’t say it? Fortunately, she didn’t have to, since other “feminists” said it for her in similar though lower profile defenses of our favorite Weiner. Consider, for example, the following, from Andrea Marcotte, a well known feminist blogger and writer who was an advisor to the well-known feminist philanderer and future felon John Edwards and who is likely most famous for her statement that anyone who extended the presumption of innocence to the as-it-turns-out *innocent* Duke lacrosse team is “rape-loving scum”:

Prior to this scandal, the media and political operatives had to at least pretend that a politician's sex life had some bearing on the public interest before they picked up the pitchforks. Being an adulterer wasn't, in and of itself, a matter of public interest. There had to be a hook. If you were a social conservative who advocated for using the government to control the sexual behavior of consenting adults, for instance, then you were held to your own standard and your adulteries were considered public business. . . .

But with this Weiner scandal, there's not even the veneer of an excuse in play. Weiner has an outstanding record supporting sexual rights of others, with 100% ratings from NARAL and Planned Parenthood, and has a strong record of support for gay rights.

The whole thing is batty, of course, but the last bit is the relevant bit. Why should liberals, progressives, and indeed feminists fight to save Weiner from the proverbial gallows? Because he has an outstanding record supporting sexual rights of others, of course. And what do we mean by sexual rights? Well, he supports abortion, 100% of the time, under all conditions, no questions asked. And what could possibly be more important than that?

Thirteen years ago, when Bill Clinton got caught diddling an intern and then lying about it under oath, he had to call in every favor he had outstanding in order to survive the political storm that followed. And naturally, one of the biggest debtors of all, and therefore one of the biggest favors owed, was on behalf of the so-called feminist movement, which adored the "Big He" not only for bringing the smartest woman in the history of the world into the "co-presidency," but for fighting diligently against the short, nasty, and brutish Republican revolutionaries who clearly wanted nothing more than to subjugate women, turn back the clocks hundreds of years, and

destroy all progress made by women over the previous two centuries. And who, moreover, had a diabolical plan to do just that simply by preventing doctors from jabbing scissors into the skulls of half-born infants. (Clever bastards!)

The "feminists" – and please note that we use the scare quotes advisedly – had spent the previous decade criminalizing everything from dating in the workplace to hanging up pictures of one's honeymoon in one's cubicle, all under the notion that they could create a "hostile workplace" for female employees. But when their hero was caught engaged in a grossly inappropriate and "inequitable" relationship with an intern young enough to be his daughter, they sprang to his defense, abandoning what might otherwise be called their "principles," all because they felt they owed him for his defense of abortion against the angry hordes of reactionaries. Recall, as we noted last week, the voice of a generation of young, leftish women, *Time* magazine's political reporter Nina Burleigh, who proudly declared that she would "happily give him [Clinton] [oral sex] just to thank him for keeping abortion legal."

Then and ever since, we and countless others have had little choice but to laugh at these so-called feminists. Not only did they sell themselves out in attempt to salvage their political influence, they did so incredibly cheaply. They saved their heart throb, it's true. But two years later, he was gone. And so was their credibility. And neither would ever come back.

But while we certainly enjoyed watching the left-wing feminist scolds relinquish their credibility in defense of such an infamous womanizer as Clinton, it occurred to us then, and is driven home even more forcefully to us now in the wake of Weinegate, just how tragic this surrender was.

The feminist movement, such as it is, was born of real and genuine need. Women in this country and indeed throughout the West had been treated shabbily for centuries and faced difficult and, in many cases, harrowing circumstances in their struggle to achieve

social, political, and economic equality with men – struggles which are not yet entirely won, even to this day. About that there can be no doubt.

And even under the guidance of the radical leftists who have generally controlled and directed the movement for most of its history and especially for the last half century, the feminist movement did direct its efforts at many important and necessary ends. The late Andrea Dworkin, for example, a radical leftist if ever there was one, spent the entirety of her career as a feminist leader fighting against the sexual exploitation of women and specifically against the sexual exploitation and objectification of women through pornography. Agree or disagree with Dworkin on other matters – and there was always much about which to disagree with her – she was absolutely right that women were (and still are, by the way) being exploited and abused by pornographers.

Unfortunately, by the 1990s, the entire feminist movement had ceased to be about anything to do with protecting women or liberating women or aiding women through the sometimes painful social dislocation associated with full equality, and had become almost exclusively about one thing, that which Nina Burleigh thought was so neat that she would happily mimic the molested and maligned intern to thank the President for “keeping legal.”

A real “feminist,” of course, might have taken offense at the idea of the married, most powerful man in the world carrying on with an unpaid intern a few years older than his daughter. A real “feminist” might have taken offense at the fact that he and his staff then tried to paint her as a stalker and a psychopath who needed help; that they tried to destroy her rather than tell the truth. A real “feminist” might have found the whole thing and whole discrepancy between the two to be enough to turn her stomach, and her opinion of the reprobate who sat in the Oval Office. But not Burleigh. And not the gals over at NOW. They all stuck by Bill. Because he was their guy. And he kept abortion legal.

How did we ever get to this point where the so-called feminists would gladly – or “happily” to use Burleigh’s term – give up one of their “sisters,” or anything else, for that matter, just for the sake of abortion? We can’t say for sure, but we suspect it has a great deal to do with a group called Emily’s List.

Emily’s List, of course, is quite likely the most successful and most famous political action committee (PAC) around, and it is one dedicated specifically to electing women and pro-choice women candidates. The “Emily” in Emily’s List is an acronym that stands for “Early Money Is Like Yeast,” which is to say, that it makes the “dough” rise and thereby scares off competitors.

Emily’s List was founded in 1984 by the left-wing activist, IBM heiress, and former press secretary for the National Women’s Political Caucus Ellen Malcolm. Emily’s List has been a pioneer in “bundling” donations, which is the process of taking small donations from several members and grouping them, directing them to specific candidates, thereby giving the donating PAC far more influence with the candidate than individual donors would have.

Emily’s List has always prided itself on being “pro-woman” and aggressively and specifically “pro-choice.” Clues as to why this connection might be so strong can be found in the biography of one of the group’s founding members:

She has used her influence and resources to work for equal rights and opportunities for women, serving on the board of the National Women’s Political Caucus, and then being instrumental in the founding of three powerful women’s organizations [including] EMILY’s List, which raises money for pro-choice, Democratic women political candidates . . .

This bio, of course, belongs to one Christie Hefner, daughter of Hugh Hefner and the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Playboy Enterprises,

Inc. Ms. Hefner's bio also notes that she is "widely acknowledged as having developed the strategies for reinventing Playboy Enterprises as a successful global multimedia corporation . . .

Got that? Hef's daughter saved Playboy enterprises from financial ruin, in part by turning it into a global "multimedia" porn operation (magazines, videos, and now internet), while at the same time partnering with Ellen Malcom at both the National Women's Political Caucus (founded by Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem, among others) and at Emily's List to direct "feminist" attention specifically and aggressively toward abortion rights and away from other areas of traditional feminist interest – such as...say...pornography. Kinda neat how that works, no?

In any case, what we have been left with, then, is a "women's" movement that really doesn't care anything at all about women, except in that they are able to get an abortion whenever and wherever they choose. We here at The Political Forum make no secret whatsoever about our political leanings and therefore about our feelings about social issues and specifically about abortion. But even if we were not as deeply and adamantly pro-life as we are, we would find this particular evolution of the feminist movement profoundly troubling. The women (and to a lesser extent the men) who purport to stand for and to represent the rights and the political aspirations of women as a whole have allowed themselves to be reduced to a single issue, which not only makes them a laughingstock in the cases where they find it necessary to defend adulterous womanizers like Clinton and Weiner, but also forces them to sacrifice actual, real human woman with actual, real needs to their paranoia about abstract principles.

We've already been through the case of Clinton, obviously, where too many "feminists" were more than willing to allow a young girl to be destroyed, despite the fact that Clinton's prospective replacement, Vice President Al Gore would have been equally pro-choice. The case of Anthony Weiner may be equally, if not more grotesque. Not only is he less relevant politically to the survival of the abortion status quo,

but what he has done is quite possibly even more vile and more anti-woman. Here, we'll let his onetime girlfriend and, up until last week, onetime defender, the former Clinton administration official and political consultant Kirsten Powers do the "honors." Please note: given the nature of the material that follows, you may want to censor the people with whom you share this section of this newsletter:

But even if I could see past the lying and extreme narcissism that is noteworthy even by Washington standards, there is the issue of his attitude toward women. What has emerged is a picture of a predator trolling the Internet for women—some half his age—with which to engage in cybersex. We know only about the women who were responsive to his overtures. The odds are very high that he struck out with many, and other women were victim to his unsolicited sex talk. Women should be able to "friend" a married—or unmarried—congressman on Facebook or follow him on Twitter without fear of being the recipient of lewd talk or behavior. Just because a woman "likes" your video on Facebook doesn't mean you can send her a picture of your penis. This is textbook sexual harassment. It may not be illegal, but it's definitely unethical. He is in a position of influence, and many women—especially a 21-year-old—would be afraid to report a congressman doing that to them because he holds so much power. Also, he claims none of the women he contacted were underage, but how could he possibly know that?

By far the most disturbing information that we have been privy to—there is, no doubt, more out there that we don't know—is the transcript of a nine-month "sexting" relationship Weiner had with a Las Vegas blackjack dealer. Radar Online posted the transcript, and it is rife

with misogyny and distorted views about women. In referring to oral sex, Wiener tells her, “You will gag on me before you c** with me in you” and “[I’m] thinking about gagging your hot mouth with my c***.” This is not about sex. It’s about dominating and inflicting physical pain on a woman, a fantasy the hard-core porn industry makes billions of dollars on selling to men. You don’t want to gag a woman with your penis unless you have some serious issues with the way you see women.

As for his other views of women, he tells her, “I hear liberal girls are very, uh, accommodating of other[s],” playing on a bogus stereotype that politically liberal women are promiscuous. When he asks the woman, who is Jewish, “You give good h**d?” and she says yes, he exclaims: “Wow a Jewish girl who sucks c***! this thing is ready to do damage.”

There is a word for this kind of man. And that word is not “liberal” or “progressive,” contra Janeane Garofalo and Amanda Marcotte and *Salon’s* Joan Walsh, who has also defended Weiner and said that liberals shouldn’t let conservative “family-values moralizers” tell them what they should do about him. Rather, that word is “misogynist.”

Since Ms. Powers wrote these words, we have also learned that Congresscreep Weiner was involved in private conversations with a 17 year-old high-school girl, which means that it is also quite possible that, again contra Garofalo, Weiner has broken some laws.

Whatever the case, it is clear that Weiner is bad to and bad for women. He’s a creep. And a misogynist. And a narcissist. And possibly worse. But that’s deemed okay by the feminist hierarchy, apparently, because, as Amanda Marcotte put it, he has “100% ratings from NARAL and Planned Parenthood.” That’s nuts. These are actual, real, flesh and blood women with whom he has been playing out his power-exploitation

fantasies – or possibly, even, actual, real, flesh and blood *girls*. All of this begs the question: Is there anything – anything at all – that today’s so-called feminists would deem morally contemptible from a male politician as long as he had the “proper” views and voting record on abortion?

Sadly, we suspect we know the answer to that question.

Sadder still, the effects of this obsession – and really, that’s the only word for it – with abortion extends far beyond the few women and/or girls who had the grave misfortune of finding a creepy Congressman attractive. Throughout the world, advances in neonatal health care and technology and easy access to abortion have combined to create an enormous and horrifying crisis, namely the wholesale slaughter of female babies/fetuses. The world has long been aware of the fact that China’s One-Child policy has produced an unusually high percentage of male babies. So too in much of the rest of the Far East, where economic development and lower fertility rates have led to selective abortion of females. Now comes word that the tragedy continues to spread, even to the world’s largest democracy. The BBC reports:

India’s 2011 census shows a serious decline in the number of girls under the age of seven - activists fear eight million female foetuses may have been aborted in the past decade. The BBC’s Geeta Pandey in Delhi explores what has led to this crisis.

Kulwant has three daughters aged 24, 23 and 20 and a son who is 16.

In the years between the birth of her third daughter and her son, Kulwant became pregnant three times.

“My mother-in-law taunted me for giving birth to girls. She said her son would divorce me if I didn’t bear a son.”

Kulwant still has vivid memories of the first abortion. “The baby was nearly five months old. She was beautiful. I miss her, and the others we killed,” she says, breaking down, wiping away her tears.

Until her son was born, Kulwant’s daily life consisted of beatings and abuse from her husband, mother-in-law and brother-in-law. Once, she says, they even attempted to set her on fire

In 1961, for every 1,000 boys under the age of seven, there were 976 girls. Today, the figure has dropped to a dismal 914 girls. . . .

Campaigners say the decline is largely due to the increased availability of antenatal sex screening, and they talk of a genocide.

Genocide? Against girls? In an allied power? Sounds like something that should concern this nation and concern it deeply – particularly with one of the world’s leading global *feminist* icons leading the country’s State Department, right?

Well . . . not so much. You see, any criticism of abortion, even when it is used for manifestly and inarguably destructive and anti-woman purposes – as, quite clearly, it is being used in India, as well as many other places through the world, is strictly forbidden, largely because it might be seen as . . . ummm . . . a criticism of abortion. And we can’t have that, now can we? Even when the result is, as the BBC’s “campaigners” call it, “a genocide” being perpetrated *against women*.

As we said at the top of this piece, this really is a bizarre and absurd country some times. It is possible for a Congressman who had private twitter conversations with 17 year-old girls to excuse himself for a while to seek “treatment” and then return to his seat. It is possible for the daughter of the world’s most famous pornographer to involve herself in

the political process to the end of directing public attention away from pornography, for no one to notice, much less care, and for her not only to brag about it but to be honored as a pioneer for doing so. And it is possible for a movement that purports to represent more than half of the nation’s population – women – to focus its entire political energy on a single issue, not merely to the disregard of all other issues, but even when that single issue proves obviously and unquestionably damaging to women. That’s nuts. All of it.

We don’t have the time or the energy today to argue about the intellectual and moral underpinnings of American liberalism. Perhaps someday our book on the subject will be suitable for publication and we’ll be able in situations such as these simply to refer to pertinent passages from it. For our purposes today, though, it should suffice to say that liberalism was once, at the very least, animated by noble spirits. The civil rights movement, in particular – as it applied to minorities and women – was among the most noble and courageous causes undertaken in the twentieth century. And it was undertaken largely by American liberalism. As the liberal intellectual Walter Russell Meade put it last December:

When it came to both gender and (perhaps their greatest accomplishment) race . . . liberals did yeoman service to the cause of human freedom by opening the doors of full participation more widely than ever before. If efforts to create a more just and open society sometimes crossed the line into illiberal restrictions on speech (especially at citadels of political correctness like some universities), and if programs like school busing and affirmative action were sometimes counterproductive, nevertheless the great effort to open the gates of American opportunity to non-whites, with special attention to African-Americans, was on the whole and in its broad outline one of the greatest triumphs ever of the liberal spirit.

Unfortunately, that yeoman's work has, in many cases – and especially gender – become perverted by liberalism's inability to deal with the world as it is rather than as it wishes it would be. As we've said, there are still very real and very serious problems confronting women and girls in this country. And as any father of girls can tell you, one of the critical problems is how to protect girls from predatory creeps in cyberspace.

Of course, this problem and countless others will not be addressed or even discussed with the seriousness they deserve as long as men like Anthony Weiner are defended and, indeed, sanctified by those who claim to represent women, simply because he supports abortion. Whatever one thinks of abortion – pro, anti, or indifferent – it is hard to deny that the feminist movement's single-minded fixation on the issue as the only measure of “women's rights” is both absurd and damaging, and damaging especially *to women*.

The past couple weeks of Weiner jokes have been a great deal of fun. But there's a great deal more at stake here that is sometimes obscured by the mockery. Anthony Weiner is objectively anti-woman. And those who defend him are as well. That they are, unquestioningly granted the title “feminist” is not only absurd but does great rhetorical and even, in some cases, real violence to actual women and girls who deserve far better.

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